

A BRIEF *Relation*
NARRATIVE

OF SOME

Considerable Passages

Concerning the First Gathering, and
further Progress of a CHURCH of
CHRIST, in Gospel-Order,

IN

Boston in NEW-ENGLAND,

Commonly (though falsely) called by the Name

OF

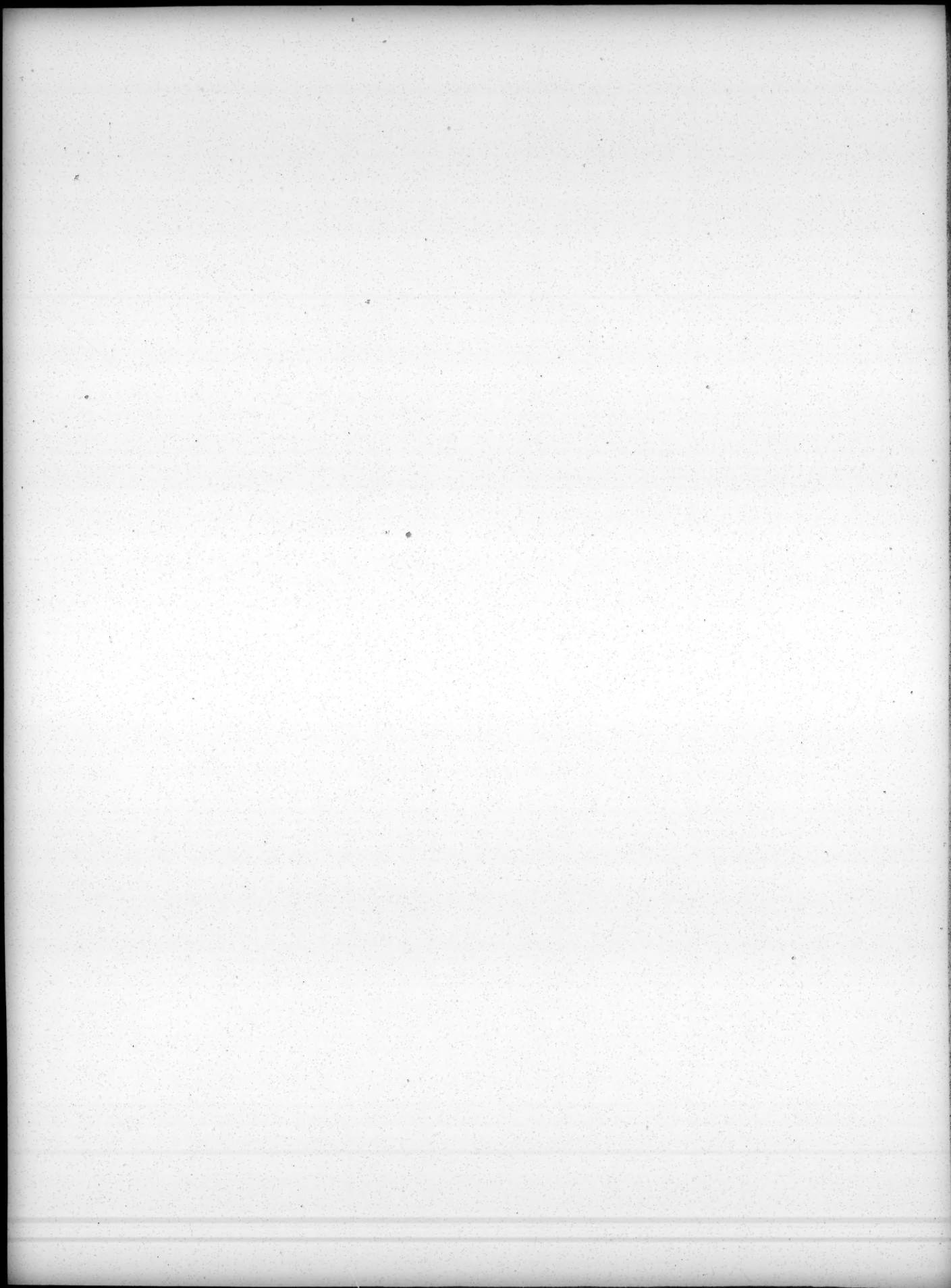
ANABAPTISTS;

For clearing their Innocency from the
Scandalous things laid to their charge.

Set forth by JOHN RUSSEL, an Officer of the
said Church, with Consent of the whole.

Dated in *Boston*, 20th, 3d Month, 1680.

L O N D O N, Printed by J. D. in the Year, 1680.



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Christian Reader

WE leave the ensuing Apology to speak and plead for it self in your own Conscience, the causes of its coming in this Method to your View. The Candor and Ingenuity that ought to be in Men, much more that Grace and Commiseration that possesseth the Hearts of good men, will perswade to a patient hearing and impartial weighing of that Just Defence that is therein made. If any demand why we concern our selves so much as to prefix this short Epistle in the behalf of those so remote from us; our answer is, That one and the self same Spirit who is in all Sincere Christians, conjoyning them as living members into one Body, worketh also in them like passions either as to joy in prosperity, or grief in trouble, whether internal or external; And the very notice and Communication of each others State removes all distance of place, promotes Sympathy, and tends to make their State mutually present with each other. Moreover, the Authors of this Apology have declared their perfect agreement with us both in matters of Faith and Worship, as set down in our late Confession. As for our Brethren of the Congregational way in Old England, both their Principles and Practices, do equally plead for our Liberties as for their own; And it seems most strange that such of the same way in New-England, yea even such (a generation not yet extinct, or the very next successors of them) who chose rather (with liberal estates) to depart from their native Soil into a Wilderness, then be under the imposition and lash of those who upon Religious pretences took delight to smite their Fellow-servants; should exercise towards others the like severity that themselves with so great hazard and hardship sought to avoid; Especially considering that it is against their Brethren, who avowedly profess and appeal to the same rule with themselves for their guidance in, and decision of all matters relating to the Worship of God, and the ordering of their whole Conversation. And that the present Molestation given to them is meerly for a

I Cor. 12.

13. 26.

Heb: 13. 3.

Col. 2. 1. 5.

-To the Reader

supposed error in one point relating to the right subject of Baptism, which hath been much controverted amongst Learned, Judicious, Holy and good Men at many seasons ever since the Reformation. upon such occasions, for one Protestant Congregation to persecute another (where there is no pretence to an infallibility in the decision of all Controversies) seemes much more unreasonable then all the Cruelties of the Romish Church towards them that depart from their Superstitions; And certainly if prejudices were removed, and opportunities of Power not abused, but so far improved that the Golden Rule of our Saviour [All things which you would that men should do unto you, so do ye unto them] were duly attended unto and rightly applied in the present case, more moderation, yea even compassion would be exercised towards these our Christian Friends by such as now give them trouble: And we heartily pray, that the Honourable Governors in New-England will have that regard to all the Congregational Churches here, as to remit such proceedings, which tend to confirm and justify those who seek to overthrow all their Assemblies, and that they will not, by persisting in any rigorous Course against these their Brethren in the Faith of our Lord Jesus, strengthen the bands of such who have already published, That their proceedings with them of the Congregational way here in this kind, are justified by the process of their Brethren against other dissenters in New-England. This subject is so large and the Plea it affords so rational, that we can hardly keep within the short limits appointed to this Epistle; But we will add no more, save our hearty Prayers for the Peace of them, that in every Place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus, both their Lord and ours: And shall ever be,

Yours in all Christian respect
and Service to our Power.

Will: Kiffen.	Hanserd Knolles.
Daniel Dyke.	John Harris.
Will: Collins.	Neh: Cox.

Dr. Still-
ingfleet
mischiefe of
Seperation.

A brief Narrative of some Considerable Passages, concerning the first gathering, and further progress, of a Church of Christ, in Gospel Order, in Boston in New-England, for clearing their Innocency from the Scandalous things laid to their charge.

IT pleased God to move the Hearts of some of his dear and Precious Servants in this Wilderness, whom he had by his good Word and Spirit taught, and instructed in the Way and Order of the Gospel, to agree together to enter into Fellowship as a particular Body, or Church, ingaging one to another in a Solemn Covenant, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to walk in fellowship, and communion together, in the practice of all the Holy Appointments of Christ, which he had, or should further make known unto them. And thus they became a visible Church of Christ, walking in the Practice, and performance of the holy Ordinances of Christ, according to Divine Institution: The Persons who began (this so good a work for God,) were, *Thomas Gold, Thomas Osburne, Edward Drinker, John George, Richard Goodal, William Turner, Robert Lambert*: the three last named, were persons whom God (by his Providence some time before) brought out of *Old England*, who had walked with the Baptized Churches there; as namely *Richard, Goodall*, was of a Church in *London*, of which *Mr. Kiffen* is an Officer; and *William Turner*, and *Robert Lambert*, were of a Church in *Dartmouth*, of which one *Mr. Stead* was Officer.

No sooner were these Servants of Christ entred upon this work of the Lord, but they met with great troubles and afflictions, as hath always befallen those whom the Lord hath been pleased to single out from others to bear witness to his Truth; Much Scandal and reproach hath been cast on them, their troubles, and temptations followed, one upon the neck of another, like the waves of the Sea: but these precious Servants of the Lord having in some good measure counted the Cost before hand, were not moved for any of these things, but were chearfully carryed on by the good hand of the Lord upon them, through all the Afflictions, and Reproaches they met

with; And are the most of them now at rest with the Lord, having served the Will of God in their Generation.

And now we who survive, considering the many and grievous Scandals that have bin by rugged Spirits cast upon these first Beginners in the Church of Christ, that are renewed, and augmented from time to time upon us, both by speaking, and writings; And that on purpose to render us odious, and make the World to think that we are a People not fit to live; as indeed we were not, if we were as vile as we are rendered to be. But the Lord, to whom we do both desire, and endeavour to approve our selves in sincerity, will one day clear our Innocency, as the light at noon-day. Considering what is premised, we think our selves concerned and obliged, for the sake of Christ, and his truth that we do profess, and bear Witness to, To give some brief account of things, for the clearing our selves of those heinous things laid to our charge. As to the manifold Sufferings we have undergone in our Persons, Estates and Liberties, we shall not give a Particular account at this time; only this in general, That soon after our first beginning, some of us were oft-times brought before Councils, and Courts, threatned, fined, our Estates taken away, Imprisoned, and Banished; but notwithstanding it hath pleased the Lord still to uphold us, in the midst of all these fore troubles, that instead of being weakened and diminished, we have bin further strengthened, and increased. Thus wonderful doth the Lord appear from time to time to assist poor weak Instruments in doing and suffering what he call's them to for his Name sake. Now as touching what we have suffered, and still do suffer in our names, by reason of those Scandalous things laid to our Charge, which are as followeth; *Schismatical, Scandalous Persons, Disorderly Disturbers of the Peace; Underminers of the Churches, Neglecters of the Publick Worship of God on the Lord's-days, Idolaters, Enemies to Civil Government, &c.* To these we shall give some brief Reply.

Charge 1.

That we are a Schismatical Company, who have rent our selves from the Churches of Christ, and do receive into our Society such who have through Discontent, disorderly left the Churches with whom they have walked.

Ans. To which we answer, That this is a mistake in those that so charge us. For,

First; As to the first Beginners, who are before named, Three of them, viz. *Richard Goodal, William Turner, and Robert Lambert*, were Persons who had walked in the same way and order, in the Churches in *Old England*, who were by the Providence of God, brought into
this

this Land, and had Letters of Recommendation from the Churches to whom they did belong.

2. Two of the other four; Viz. *Edward Drinker*, and *John George*, were Persons that were never joyned to any Church before, who were Persons of good repute, for their sober and honest Conversations.

3. The other two; Viz. *Thomas Gold*, and *Thomas Osburne*, had walked some years together in Fellowship with a Church, in the *Congregational way*, as it is called, and were reputed by all that know them, to be very Godly Men, Men of Holy and blameless Conversations, until such time as they came to question the Baptizing of Infants, not seeing any light for it from the Word of God, and that Baptism should be administred to visible professing Believers; Whereupon, *Tho. Gold* did withhold his Children from Baptism, (as it is called) & also did manifest his dissent from the Church in this practice, at such times when they did Sprinkle their Children, by sitting down: both which was greatly offensive to the Church. For which cause the Church dealt with him, and he remaining unconvinced, they proceed to lay him under Admonition, and wholly denied him Communion with them; Whereas he could then have freely held Communion with them, if they would have born with his dissenting in that one particular of Infant Baptism. And under this Admonition he continued 7 or 8 Years, living without the injoyment of the Ordinances of Christ; about which time our Church was gathered. And likewise *Thomas Osburne*, for his not seeing light for the Baptizing of Infants, dissenting from it; and as also his withdrawing communion from the Church, being dissatisfied with that rugged frame of Spirit in them towards those that differed from them, as also because he could not injoy all the Ordinances of Christ with them; for which cause the Church dealt with him, and laid him under Admonition. So that they did not rend from the Church, so as to become guilty of Schism, but were shut out by them, from Communion with them, and that for no other cause, then hath been already expressed.

4. As to our receiving into our Society such who have disorderly rent themselves from the Church, we answer; That there have bin since the beginning of this Church, about 4 or 5 Persons that have left the Churches they had walked with, and have joyned themselves unto us, the most of them being Persons of good repute for Godliness, both before, and since, that could never be justly charged with anything of a Scandalous Nature. The grounds of their leaving or withdrawing themselves from the Churches of whom they were, are chiefly these two:

1. Their not seeing light for the Baptizing of Infants, as also being

convinced, that themselves were Unbaptized ; And that it was their duty to seek to enjoy it, the which they could not obtaine in those Churches; neither would these Churches admit them to hold Communion with them, if they did obtain it else were, and were contented to remain with them ; for this hath bin tried.

2. Their dissatisfaction in respect of that bitterness of Spirit in them, to those that in these respects did differ from them, and therefore could not with freedom of Spirit continue with them. And further, for the most part of them, they did not come off, before they had used means to obtain free leave, and liberty from the Churches to which they did belong ; but all means used not being successful to obtain it, then they took it. So that it appears that it was not for any sinful Distemper of Discontent, or because they were weary of the Yoke of Christ, or that they would be more at liberty from under the Discipline and Government of Christ, but out of tenderness of Conscience, because of some things practised, which they could not see light for ; As also because they could not enjoy all the Ordinances of Christ with them; and that they might enjoy all the Ordinances of Christ with more purity, and worship him more according to Gospel-institution. Now whether this be to be accounted Schism, we leave to the judgment of sober Christians.

Charge 2.

That we are Scandalous persons, and that in these three respects; (1) That the foundation was laid with excommunicate Persons. (2) In that we called such to Administer the holy things of God among us, who were justly for Scandal cast out of the other Churches. And (3) for receiving such into our Society.

Ans. This is a gross mistake; for first, As to those who were the first beginners of this Church, who were Seven in Number, all of them Men of good repute for Godliness among their Neighbours, but two of them were excommunicate Persons, viz. *Thomas Gold*, and *Thomas Osburne*, of whom there hath been some account given, in pag. 2. And concerning whom we shall give some further account. These Persons as aforesaid, being (by the Church to whom they did belong) laid under Admonition, and wholly shut out from Communion with them in the Ordinances of Christ; and one of them, namely, *Thomas Gold*, having so remained for 7 or 8 Years; in which space of time he was brought before seven or eight Courts, and in some of them to be tryed in order to Banishment, And for no other crime, then withholding his Childe from being sprinkled; who, after so long waiting, could have no help in the case, but was like so to

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continue all his days, without the injoyment of the Ordinances of Christ. And further, being convinc'd that it was his duty himself to be Baptized according to the Institution of Christ, and there being a competent number of them thus inclined, and agreed in their principles (viz. the Persons named in pag. 1.) They took it into their Consideration to gather themselves into a Church-state, that so they might be in the practice and enjoyment of all the precious Ordinances and Appointments of Christ, according to the will of their Lord and Master; which they did undertake, after many Consultations about it, and many Solemn seekings of the Lord for direction in so great an Undertaking. Upon which proceeding of theirs, so soon as known, the Church with which *Thomas Gold* and *Thomas Osburn* had formerly walked, sent for them, to deal further with them; who at first thought not to have gone, being now not of them; but on further consideration, and being sent for (the second time) they determined to go to them, and give them a hearing, but told the Messengers that were sent to them, that they could not come on that day they required, because it was the day they had appointed to break Bread, but they would come the next day, if the Lord did permit them: but Notwithstanding, they not coming on the day that they required them (though they could not, for the reason before mentioned) the Officer of the Church proceeds to cast them unto Satan, grounding his proceeding on that in *Mat. 18. Not hearing the Church*; but their crime was no other then what hath bin already declared. So that from hence, two things are to be observed, (1) That their Excommunication by the Church, with whom they had formerly walked, was some considerable time after they had been gathered into Church-Society, which was a long time after they had been denied Communion with them, especially one of them, (namely) *Thomas Gold*. (2) That this Excommunication was not for any Scandalous sin, committed, and persisted in by them; which if it had, then their Excommunication had been just; (Unless a Diligent endeavour to enjoy Christ in the way of his Ordinances, according to Divine Institution, be a Scandalous evil:) But because they did not hear the Church. And this not hearing the Church, was no other then not coming, when the Church sent for them, i. e. on that day they required them: though their answer was, not that they would not come, but that they could not come on that day, but did promise that they would come. Now whether this Excommunication were Just, We leave it to the Judgment of all sober, unbiassed Christians.

2. The second thing for which we are rendered Scandalous, is for calling to office, such who had bin for Scandal justly delivered unto Satan.

Satan. To which we answer, that there was never but one that was called to office among us, who had any such Censure passed on him, viz. *Thomas Gold*, concerning whom you have had a true account given. In whose Excommunication there appeared no just objection against his being called to Office, he being also a man who was in some good measure fitted, and qualified with the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, for such a work; and indeed proved an Eminent Instrument in the hand of the Lord, for the carrying on this work of God in its low and weak beginnings, when exposed to great sufferings.

The third thing for which we are rendered Scandalous, is, the receiving into our Society those, who for moral Evils have bin justly cast out of the Churches.

Ans. To which we answer, That since the first gathering of this Church, which was on the 28th of the 3^d Mon. 1665. there have bin added about sixty Persons or more, of which number, there have bin but two, that were cast out of other Churches, viz. *Thomas Foster*, and *John Farnum*, concerning whom we shall give some brief account. (1) As for *Thomas Foster*, the ground and cause for which the Church to whom he did belong, did first deal with him, was only his dissenting from them in Infants-Baptism: he not seeing any light from the Word of God for it, did shew his Dissent, in departing the Meeting when that was perform'd; for until this time he was in repute among them for a very Godly man, and is so to this day among the generality of people to whom he is known; and we doubt not but that he is so still in the Consciences of those that have proceeded against him, who indeed is an aged, grave, sober Christian. * But the Church dealing with him for the crime above mentioned, and not being able to convince him from the Word of God, but that he still held his Judgment in that matter, they proceeded to lay him under Admonition, and wholly debarr'd him Communion with them; until such time as he should repent, and reform; (though he then could, and would have gladly held Communion with them, if they would have borne with him in that one particular) but lying under this Admonition for some time, and seeing no hope of reconciliation, unless he would act against his own Conscience; And also being further convinced, that it was his duty to be Baptized, (according to both the precept and example of our Lord Jesus Christ,) he applyed himself to us, by whom he was baptized, and received into fellowship. Which being some time after taken notice of, the Church to which he did belong, did proceed, from their Admonition to Excommunication, and delivered him unto Satan, rendering the matter, or cause, for for which they dealt with him, from first to last,

to be the breach of 4 of the moral Precepts; viz. the 2. 3. 4. and 5. But had not any thing to lay to his charge, from first to last, but what hath been before delivered, excepting any thing of infirmity that might appear in him, in the managing of this difference, by which any advantage might be taken.

1. From whence we observe these two things, (1) That the grounds of the Churches proceeding against him from first to last, was not for any Scandalous or moral Evils, but for matter of Conscience in things wherein he did differ from them.

2. That this Excommunication was some considerable time after his being received into fellowship with us, and was not under the sentence of Excommunication when we received him. Now whether the receiving of this person into fellowship be matter of Scandal, We leave to the Consideration of the wise and Sober Christian.

In the next place come's in Consideration the case of *John Farnum*, who was under the sentence of Excommunication when he was received by us into fellowship, and he is all that ever we did receive, that stood in such a Capacity.

Now concerning this man, whilst he did walk in fellowship with the Church by whom he was Excommunicated, he was in repute among them for a very Godly Man, and was deputed by them to be a *Deacon*. But when he came to dissent from the Church in the Baptizing of Infants, then they became disaffected towards him; and he being also dissatisfied with his own Baptism that he had in his Infancy, and looking on himself Unbaptized, and being also dissatisfied with the rugged Spirit, that did so much appear in the Church towards those that did in these things differ from them, he did then withdraw from Communion with them, and did often frequent our Meeting, which was one thing for which the Church did proceed in dealing with him; unto which were gathered divers other things, and laid to his Charge, which had a face of Scandal on them, as they were taken, and construed: But his unchristian carriage towards them, in the time of their dealing with him, was considerable, and therefore in the receiving of this man into fellowship, We must acknowledg that there was a defect, but yet not a wilful defect, however it may be rendred by our Opponents. Was there ever any Church so perfect in all their Actions (especially in their first and weak beginnings) as to be free from all defect, and not to have done any thing that they might see cause afterwards to judge it had been better left undone ?

The Church was then under manifold Temptations and Distractions, by reason of the opposition they met with ; but not long since, about some 2 or 3 years past, there being a great Clamour revived, and renewed upon us, for receiving of persons excommunicated for moral Evils, and that in the issue it centered chiefly on this Man, we were much dissatisfied, and determined to make diligent search to know the truth of it, that we might clear our selves.

The which accordingly we did, and sent Messengers to the Officer of the Church by whom he was cast out, and procured under his hand from the Church Records, a copy of their Proceedings with him, and the ground thereof; which having obtained, and diligently perused, did find that his Carriage, and Behaviour towards the Church in the time of their dealing with him, were justly offensive, unchristian like, and much unbecoming the Gospel, which was the chief matter of fact we could find in all their Charges. Whereupon we then laboured to convince him of the evil of them, and kept him off from Communion, until he should give Satisfaction, wherein he had miscarried ; who did in a short time fall under his offences, and gave us good satisfaction, and tendered the same unto the Church, by whom he was excommunicated ; by which they were well satisfied, excepting one, who would not be satisfied unless he would come and joyn with them again, but that he could not yield to. This hath bin affirmed by some of their Members to some of us.

Now from what we have said in this matter, this is to be observed, That though there was an oversight in the receiving this Man; and that the Church was not so careful to inquire how things were, or were hard to give credit to what they might have reported of his Miscarriage to the Church, as things were then circumstanced ; it being designed by our opposites to cast all the reproach on us that they could any manner of way, to make us vile in the Eyes of the People, hoping thereby to prevent (at least) our increasing. Yet we have now cleared our selves from being of such principles, as to receive any Scandalous person or persons, justly excommunicated for moral Evils, by what we have done, and the pains we have taken in this matter, as hath bin declared ; and therefore how unjust a thing it is still to lay such things to our Charge, to scandalize our Name, as hath been done of late in their Printed Book, viz. *The Conclusions of the late Synod*, and also in a Book newly printed, entituled, *The divine Right of Infant Baptism*; we leave to consideration.

Charge.

Charge. 3.

Another thing laid to our Charge is, That we are disorderly persons, and walk disorderly.

Ans. This is also a mistake: for our practice, and walking, is according to, and agreeable with the Orders of the Lord Jesus Christ, therefore orderly: for we walk in Church-fellowship together; and continue in the Apostles Doctrine, Fellowship, breaking Bread, and Prayer, *Act. 2.* and that on the first day of the week, by Persons elected, and ordained to Office, for the Administration of the holy Ordinances of Christ.

Charge 4.

Another thing we are charged with is, That we are disturbers of the Publick Peace.

Ans. We have never yet been found making any disturbance, by raising any Tumults, or causing any Sedition, either in Church or Commonwealth; nor are those that accuse us, able to prove the things whereof they do accuse us. Indeed after the way that is called Heresie, so worship we the God of our Fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law, and the Prophets; and have hope towards God of the Resurrection of the Dead, both of the just, and unjust, and herein do exercise our selves always, to have a Conscience void of offence towards God, and towards Man, *Act. 24. 13, 14, 15, 16.* We peaceably follow our lawful Employments, disturbing no Man, being desirous to have peace with all Men.

Charge 5.

We are charged to be underminers of the Churches.

This is also a great mistake: we never designed, neither do to this day design any such thing, but heartily desire and daily pray for the well-being, flourishing, and Prosperity of all the Churches of Christ, that the Lord would more and more appear among them, to revive the life and power of Godliness in them, to make known more of his Mind and Will unto them, to reform what ever is amiss among them; to continue his gracious Presence in the midst of them, and his Fatherly Protection round about them; And desire that our selves may have a peaceable living by them, as Christians.

Whereas it is said, that our Principles and Practices are destructive to their Churches. We answer, That the utmost Tendency our Principles, and practices can have with respect to their Churches, is but to reduce them to a nearer conformity to the will of Christ, but not to destroy them and there is a great difference between Reduction and Destruction.

Charge. 6.

Another thing we are charged with, is, Neglecting the Publick Worship of God on the Lord's day.

Ans. This is utterly untrue; Though this hath bin the crime that we have usually from time to time bin presented to Court for, and have **b** Courts been punished for. But it is well known that we do constantly meet on the first Day of the Week, to worship the Lord, and attend on him in all his holy Ordinances, and therefore why we should be so charged, and dealt withal, there is no reason. If it be said that we do absent from the Publick Assemblies, and meet by our selves in private houses, and therefore it is not Publick worship.

We answer, That we do meet together by our selves, and ought so to do, being an intire Church, and body by our selves, and therefore cannot meet in their Assemblies. And there was a necessity of congregating together by our selves; Because they would not admit of us to Communion with them in all the Ordinances of God, but shut us out, and would allow us no more priviledge among them, then they would allow to a Heathen, or *Publican*, viz. to come and hear in their Assemblies. For some who have desired to joyn with them, after they were Baptized, have bin denied, and that for no other reason then this, that they had submitted to Baptism according to the Command of Christ, and could see no light for Infant Baptism.

And secondly, for our meeting in Private Houses: It is true we have done so, for we must meet in such Houses as we have to meet in. But our Meeting was Publick, any one, that would, might come; and since we have for our convenience, and to take off the aspersions cast on us for meeting in Private Houses, obtained a Publick House, or a House on purpose for that use, we are become more offensive to some then we were before, so that we cannot give content to some one way nor other; for we have been shut out of our Publick House, and the Doors nayled up, and have bin forced to meet without in the open air on a very cold day. Though by the next day they were open again, we know not how, but do yet question whether we shall injoy the liberty of our House for Publick Worship or no; so that from what hath been said, it appears, that we are much wronged in this Charge.

Charge. 7.

That we are Idolaters, and therefore not to be suffered, as in the late Synod Book is concluded.

And

And the Scriptures they bring to prove it, are these ; Josh. 22. 19. Psa. 99. 8. Ezek. 43. 8. Hof. 11. 6.

Ans. The Lord God of Gods knows, and *Israel* shall know that we are innocent in this matter, *Josh. 22. 21, 22, 23.* and that what we have done, is not in rebellion, nor transgression, to turn from following the Lord, or worshipping him according to his own Appointments, but that we may with more freedom of Spirit worship the Lord together in purity. We do believe that it will appear one day that what we profess and practise, are not our own Inventions, not our own threshold, but God's threshold : nor is there such difference between us, and those that do thus accuse us, as that we should be thus rendred ; we hope that we all agree in the same foundation, Christ Jesus, and all own the same Word for our Rule: though we are imperfect in our understandings, and so are they, and who is not? the Lord forgive them, we desire to forgive them, and pray for them.

Charge 8.

We are charged to be Enemies to Civil Government.

Ans. We know no reason why we should be charged with this, not in the least degree. (1) It is directly against our Principles, and contrary to what we asserted in a Confession of Faith, that we formerly gave into the Court, as also to that Confession of Faith lately put forth by our Brethren in Old *England*, which Confession we own in every particular. (2) Our continual Prayers to God for them, according to *1 Tim. 1. 1, 2.* will witness against this charge. (3) Our constant subjection, and obedience to all their Laws, both actively (as far as we can with a good Conscience) and wherein we could not Actively, there we have been Passively obedient ; in suffering what hath bin inflicted on us, without seeking any revenge in the least.

Fourthly. In paying all due demands whatsoever ; not being desirous to withhold from *Cesar* at any time, any of his dues. In a word both our Persons and Estates are alwaies ready at command to be serviceable in the defence of the Authority, and Country, yea and have bin voluntarily offered on the high places of the Field in the time of the Countrey's greatest Extremity ; we have not thought our lives too dear, to put in our hands in the defence of the Countrey. For divers of us did with some others, freely offer our selves for the service of the Countrey against the *Indians*, even in the time of their greatest distress ; Among whom was *William Turner*, whom they pleased to make Captain of that Company, who had bin one of the greatest Sufferers among us, for the profession of Religion. He was a very worthy man

for Souldiery; And *Edward Drinker*, who had bin another sufferer, whom they pleased to make Lieutenant; And by the presence of the Lord with them, they were made instruments of the preservation of one Town from the rage of the Heathen, who did violently beset it, and break into it, but they being there, beat them out, and after this by Captain *Turner* (who was Commander in chief at that time) as an Instrument in the hand of the Lord, was the greatest blow given to the *Indians* of any they had received; for after this they were broken and scattered, so that they were overcome, and subdued with ease. In this Fight did good Captain *Turner* lose his Life. Here it is to be observed that those that had suffered so much from the Country, and have been Scandaliz'd as Enemies to the Country, and their Priviledges, freely offering themselves in the service of the Country, have been (through the Lord's presence with them) some of the principal Instruments to subdue the Barbarous Heathen, and to deliver the Countrey from its great distress; which may stand as a witness of our Fidelity to the Government to the World's End.

Thus have we bin vilified, and greatly reproached, and are still to this day. It being without any just reason laid on us, that we are one chief cause of all the Judgments of God on the Countrey. We do not excuse our selves, as not to have share, or part in many of the Sins that have provoked the Lord against Poor *New-England*; Neither have we been freed from having part with others in the general Calamities that God hath brought on this poor place. Yet it is observable how graciously the Lord hath dealt with us; that in the time of great Mortality by the Small-pox, when so many hundreds dyed, though many of us were visited with that Visitation, yet not one of our Society was removed by it: but it was not for any thing in us, that the Lord spared us, but for his Name sake, that the Mouth of our Adversaries might be silent.

But thus injuriously to be dealt with, is no new thing. How often have the most Innocent and Harmless bin rendred the most Vile, and Odious? God's poor Servants must not think much at these things; It is the way their Lord and Master hath gone in before them, and no other then he hath foretold them, that they must meet with; *Luke 21, 12. Jo. 16. 33.*

And here we cannot but take some notice of a Book lately put forth by *Mr. Maiber*, entitled *the Divine right of Infant Baptism*; (sooner said then proved.) The Book it self will sufficiently satisfy any sober unbiassed Christian that shall peruse it, what was the main, or at least;

least one main design of the Author of it, which no doubt
 (what ever is pretended) to render us as odious as he could, and not
 onely us here, but all those of God's people the World over, that pass
 under that nickname of *Anabaptists*: a very unhappy design, and
 especially in such a day as this, when the Common Adversary is too
 busy. No doubt, Satan and his Instruments are much gratified by it,
 the Common Adversary will make himself Sport with it, and the
 more that such a thing should be done in *New-England*. But we de-
 sire to lament that there should be such a Spirit breathing in Gods peo-
 ple one against another. We blame not the Author for disputing for
 what he believes to be a truth in the point of Baptism, but for casting
 so much dirt, and filth on those of the Lord's People; who are not of
 his mind in that particular; neither shall we, nor have we time now
 to take up the Arguments, to make any reply to them, they are no new
 Arguments, but such as have been oft-times sufficiently answered. As
 to the strange stories that be in it, we know not whether they be true,
 or false; we may have as much ground to question them, as to believe
 them: but if we grant they may be true, and that to the utmost ex-
 tent of what they are set out to be; it makes us, nor the Truth we pro-
 fess, never the worse, though it may cause us, and the Truth to be evil
 spoken of by some, as the miscarriages of the professors of Truth, do
 cause the Truth they profess, and the innocent professors thereof, to be
 evil spoken of: but those that profess the fear of God should know
 better then so to practise. And may not he that hath a mind to it,
 write a great Volumn of most Hideous Crimes, Abominations, Mur-
 thers, Cruel Massacres, Uncleaness, and fearfull Debaucheries. yea
 Horrid Seditions, and Insurrections, that have from time to time been
 perpetrated, by a very great, yea by the greatest number of those that
 are for Infants Baptism? and would it be well taken, and favour of a
 good Spirit, to charge all these evils upon all those that are for Infant
 Baptism; and make it an Argument to condemn them; and their
 practice, as the Author of this Book hath done on the otherhand? But
 we shall not dabble our selves with such dirty work, wickedly to in-
 jure those who are Holy, and Innocent, though we may judge them
 to be in an error, as they may judge also of us; it is better to pray one
 for another, that we all may be led into all Truth, by the Spirit of
 Truth.

We shall speak particularly (only) to what he saith in the close of
 his Book, in *page 26*; where first he is pleased to say we are combin'd in
 opposition to the Churches of Christ in *New-England*, this hath bin
 sufficiently answer'd in the foregoing discourse.

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Secondly. He chargeth us with the Sin of *Jeroboam*, in making of the lowest of the people Priests. We easily understand what he meaneth in this ; our Evil in this respect, is our calling to office those that have not bin bred up in Colledges, and taught in other Tongues, but have bin bred up to other Callings, but it is not because we are against Learning; for we do esteem it, and honour it in its place; and if we had such among us, and that they were, together with that, otherwise duly qualified for the work of the Ministry, we should readily improve them. But we do not think that the Spirit of God is locked up within the narrow limits of Colledge-Learning, that there are none fit to be called to Office in a Church but such, nor that all such are fit for such a Work, be they never so great Scholars; neither doe we think that all those that have not that Learning, are to be accounted the lowest of the People. God had indeed bounded the Priesthood to the Tribe of *Levi*; He had set apart that Tribe for that Work by a Divine Institution. But we cannot find that the Lord (by Divine Institution) hath tyed the Work of the Ministry unto men of such Learning only, but whom he will, he fits, and qualifies for that work. Neither are we left without plain Rules in the new Testament to direct us in this matter.

Thirdly; He chargeth us with a pernicious Principle in the Confession of our Faith; (that is) that Believers baptized, are visible Saints, and fit matter for a visible Church. But who dares deny this to be a sound Truth? which he is pleased to call a pernicious Principle. As for the Conclusion he draws from thence, *viz.* That there are no visible Believers but those that are Baptized, is his own, and not ours; the improvement that he makes of it, and not what we make of it. Far be it from us to judge all that are not Baptized, not to be visible Saints: for we judge that the Lord hath many precious People in the World that are not baptized, according to or in the manner that we Baptize; and further we judge they should be visible Saints, before, Baptized, or else they have no right to Baptism, for it is not Baptism that can make Saints. And as for our esteeming, and looking on Infant Baptism as nothing, or a nullity, that is true; and we can look on it no otherwise, till we see light to own it to be that which he thinks of it, *viz.* of Divine Right, which we cannot see any ground from the Word of God to do. And as for not owning their Churches to be the Churches of Christ, we never yet denied them to be Churches of Christ. It is enough for every one to prove his own Work. But we have own'd them as Churches of Christ, and do look at them as such: for where there is true matter joyned together in the bond of a Holy Covenant, they may be looked at as a true Church, though

though they may be defective in some things; and for not owning it, when put to it in a Publick Assembly, there might be good reason for that; but it was not denyed then. Christ himself did not answer Questions put to him sometimes, when he knew they were proposed for an evil end. Again, he seems to take some notice of the time that we chose to make our disturbance in, (as he call's it) and the Animator thereof. We know not well what he means by it, and therefore do not well know what to say to it. But as to the reflection of making disturbance, he seems as though he would make the World to believe that we had caused some Tumult, or Sedition, or made some Insurrection. But the thing he means, was the Act of our first gathering into a Church-state, which was not openly done, whereby there should be any disturbance caused; neither was there any, neither have we from first to last ever made or caused any disturbance; but the truth is, we have suffered very much disturbance, and have seldom been suffered to be at rest, or quiet, though none more desirous to be at peace then we. But who have bin the principal cause of our trouble and disturbance, we shall not here name; It is well enough known who they are, and how much disturbance we have met with, how often our Meetings have been disturbed by Constables, and Marshals. Further, as to the other two things: *viz* Calling to Office one that was under Church-Censure, and also the receiveing of such who for Scandal were justly excommunicated, they have been already fully answered; and therefore we shall not speak further to it here. Oh what matter of Lamentation is it, that there should be such a Spirit breathing among those that profess Godliness, and such bitterness springing up, and that in *New-England*! Can the like be parallel'd in the whole Christian World, That a People that fled from Oppression, into this Wilderness for Liberty of Conscience, should become such great Oppressors of others for their Conscientiousness to the Lord in the matters of his Worship? Yea, even such who are one with them too, in all the main points of Religion? Surely this cannot but be greatly provoking to the Eyes of the Lord, and doubtless hath had, among other Sins, a great hand in pulling down all the sore Judgments of the Lord on this poor place. O *New-England*! cease any longer to smite thy Fellow-Servants, lest he that hath already removed four of thy Candle-Sticks, whilst thou hast been labouring (though yet in vain) to remove one, come and remove all the rest, and make thy Habitation a Desolation for ever.

FINIS